

Forest Stewardship Plan Program

Plan Development Procedural Steps

Effective November 2009



1. A landowner or their agent contacts the NC Division of Forest Resources ("DFR") for forest stewardship assistance. The development of a Forest Stewardship Plan ("the Plan") for their property is requested and/or identified as a need. A DFR Forester confirms the tract is eligible/suitable for participation in the Forest Stewardship Plan Program (FSPP).
2. A DFR Forester recommends Forest Stewardship Plan cost assistance funds be utilized because:
 - A. The landowner wants the Plan to be written by a natural resource professional (typically a NC Registered Forester) who has successfully completed the DFR Forest Stewardship Plan-writer training, or;
 - B. DFR staff are unable to write the requested plan in a timely manner, or;
 - C. The characteristics of the tract in question are such that a DFR Forester determines the use of the cost assistance funds is warranted.
3. The landowner/agent completes and signs the FSPP application form (application item #11). If an agent is handling a landowner's affairs then a completed Power-of-Attorney form is required. A DFR Forester will then mail the signed application to the DFR Central Office ("CO") for funding approval. No faxed copies will be accepted. If monies are available, applications will be funded on a 1st come, 1st serve basis. An official CO funding approval letter will be generated and sent to the landowner/agent as well as the applicable DFR District Office. If funds are not available, a backlog of unfunded applications will be maintained until funding becomes available. If the Plan is written prior to the landowner/agent receiving the CO funding approval letter, the landowner will forfeit the allotted cost assistance funds.
4. Once a landowner/agent receives written verification of CO cost assistance funding approval, they should contact an approved Forest Stewardship Plan writer and request that they write a Forest Stewardship Plan for the property. This agreement or contract is solely between the landowner/agent and the approved Plan writer...the DFR will not get involved in its negotiations. The Plan writer chosen to develop the Plan must have successfully completed the Forest Stewardship Plan-writing training that is provided by the DFR's Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator or his designee. A list of all approved Plan writers who have successfully completed this training will be maintained by the DFR Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator at the CO. It will also be posted on the DFR website under the Forest Stewardship section.
5. Once an approved Plan writer is selected, the Plan may be written. Once the Plan is written and the Plan writer has coordinated with and shown it to the landowner, the Plan should be submitted to the

appropriate DFR Forester for review and cost assistance approval. The Plan should contain a signature page that has both the Plan writer's AND landowner/agent's signature to verify it has been viewed and deemed ready for submittal. The landowner/agent must also submit the invoice/bill associated with the Plan's development (this is needed prior to final payment). The reviewing Forester will typically be the DFR Service Forester servicing the county where the tract is located (other Forest Stewardship natural resource professionals such as wildlife biologists may be involved in the review process). That DFR Forester will ensure the Plan meets the minimum requirements of the Forest Stewardship Program prior to approving cost assistance funding. This includes verification that a GIS shapefile has been provided for the tract in question. If edits must be made to the Plan, the DFR Forester will coordinate with the landowner/agent and Plan writer to identify the necessary edits and/or additional information required.

6. Once the Plan has been reviewed and the DFR Forester has approved it for cost assistance funding, the DFR Forester will then complete the cost assistance application form and indicate their approval via their signature (application form items #14-#19). The finalized application form will then be sent to the DFR Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator at the CO. A check for the cost assistance amount will then be mailed to the landowner/agent. DFR Foresters will need to keep in mind the per landowner limit of 3 cost assisted Stewardship Plans per year, with an overall capped cost assistance limit of \$2,100 per year for each landowner.
7. DFR will pay a cost assistance rate based on the confirmed acreage in the approved Forest Stewardship Management Plan. Costs that exceed the amount associated with the Plan development will be the responsibility of the landowner. The landowner/agent is responsible for all payments to the approved Plan writer for the development of the Forest Stewardship Plan. DFR will not get involved in any payment discussion/exchange related to contractual agreement between the Landowner/agent and the approved Plan writer.
8. Questions regarding the Forest Stewardship Plan Program (ex. landowner eligibility; approved plan writers; final payments; etc.) which cannot be answered by DFR Assistant District Foresters or Assistant Regional Foresters should be directed toward the Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator at 919-857-4833.